

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 were pending. Claims 1-10, 14-17 and 19-20 have been rejected over the cited references. Claims 11-13 and 18 have been objected to. Claims 1 and 18 have been amended to place them in an allowable condition. Claim 12 has been amended so that it now depends from amended independent claim 1, and claims 9-11, 14 and 17 have been canceled. No new claims have been added. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 11-13, and in particular claim 11, have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but have been found allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the elements of the base claims and any intervening claims. In order to further the prosecution of the presently pending claims, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 as set forth above, without acquiescence or prejudice, so that it includes the elements of dependant claims 9-11. In addition, the dependent claims which depend from amended independent claim 1 and therefore include all the features and elements thereof, are allowable at least to the same extent that claim 1 is allowable.

Claim 18 has been objected to as being dependant upon a rejected base claim, but has been found allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the elements of the base claims and any intervening claims. In order to further the prosecution of the presently pending claims, Applicants have amended dependent claim 18 as set forth above, without acquiescence or prejudice, so that it includes the elements of the base claim 1 and intervening claim 17.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

Appl. No. 10/713,774
Amdt. dated April 19, 2006
Reply to Office Action of October 19, 2005

PATENT

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



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